

WEST LAFAYETTE POLICE MERIT COMMISSION MINUTES

September 10, 2007

The West Lafayette Police Merit Commission met in regular session at City Hall, Board of Works Room, on September 10, 2007 at 7:30 pm. In compliance with the Indiana Open Door Law, notice of this regular meeting was sent to the media and posted. Copies of the meeting agenda and unapproved minutes of the August 13, 2007 Regular Meeting were available on a chair adjacent to the entrance to the Board of Works Room.

Police Merit Commission President Polles called the meeting to order and presided.

The Pledge of Allegiance was repeated.

PRESENT: Commissioners Don Corrigan, Larry Leverenz, Virginia Nead, John Polles and Joel Weber.

ALSO PRESENT: Commission Counsel Williams, Deputy Chief Walker, and one member of the Police Department. No members of the public or the media were present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Commissioner Corrigan moved "to approve the August 13, 2007 West Lafayette Police Merit Commission meeting minutes." The motion was unanimously adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Commissioner Weber reviewed the resolution of the changes identified at the August 13th Regular Meeting to the proposed revised Article VI of the West Lafayette Police Merit Commission Rules and Regulations. After discussion, Commissioner Weber moved approval of an entirely revised Article VI, to read, "ARTICLE VI – MERIT AWARDS

The purpose of this Article is to establish the system whereby members of the West Lafayette Police Department may be recognized and commended for meritorious service. West Lafayette Police Department sworn officers as well as civilian personnel are eligible for recognition through this merit awards system.

A. Merit Awards.

Merit awards in the following categories may be awarded:

- (1) Gold. Gold awards are for actions above and beyond the call of duty, in the face of certain and imminent danger to life and limb. Awards at this level are reserved for those acts that are performed in the course of a dangerous incident to save and/or protect the life of a colleague or citizen without regard of self. These acts often result in great cost when performed, including the loss of life. Recipients shall display the highest level of professionalism, competence, leadership, and clear thinking throughout the dangerous incident whether these actions are performed while on or off duty.

(2) Silver. Silver awards are for actions above and beyond the call of duty that disregard the potential danger to self. Actions in this category are of a lesser nature than actions required to be recognized by a Gold award.

(3) Bronze. Bronze awards are for actions above and beyond the call of duty. Actions in this category are of a lesser nature than actions required to be recognized by a Silver award.

(4) Additional Awards.

- a) Injury on Duty. For injury sustained while in direct performance of the officer's duty to the public which requires hospitalization. The injury must be sustained while making an arrest, patrolling, or performing a service directly to the public.
- b) Good Conduct. For four consecutive years of good conduct.
- c) Safe Driving. For four consecutive years without a chargeable official vehicle traffic accident.
- d) Educational. For completion of a college degree while an employee of the West Lafayette Police Department or 1100 hours of certified police training.
- e) Exceptional Service. For any act judged to be exceptional in nature. This may be a single arrest, an investigation, or a series of arrests, programs, or functions at an exceptional level.
- f) Officer of the Quarter. For outstanding achievement throughout a calendar quarter that brings credit to the Police Department and which involves performance well above and beyond that required by an officer's basic assignment.
- g) Officer of the Year. For outstanding achievement throughout the year that brings credit to the Police Department and which involves performance well above and beyond that required by an officer's basic assignment.
- h) Unit/Shift Citation. For sworn members of a Unit/Shift who exhibit exceptional professional skill and conduct during a coordinated law enforcement initiative.
- i) West Lafayette Police Department Distinguished Citizen's Award. For a citizen who at grave and imminent personal danger provides extraordinary service to the West Lafayette Police Department or substantially assists in the apprehension of a criminal.
- j) West Lafayette Police Department Citizen's Award. For citizens or organizations who have aided the West Lafayette Police Department.

- B. Group Awards. Gold, Silver, or Bronze awards may be awarded as a group award in situations involving multiple officers whose individual roles cannot be measured or weighted against the actions of other officers involved in the incident. Rather, it is for those officers who, acting in concert with each other, display a high level of teamwork in controlling a disturbance or bringing an incident under control.
- C. Recommendation for an Award. Any employee of the Police Department may submit a nomination for any award. The nomination should fit the outlined criteria. The Police Department shall develop a standard nomination form for approval by the Commission.
- D. Awards Board. The Deputy Chief of Police shall chair the Awards Board. Other members of the Awards Board, appointed by the Chief, shall include one of the Patrol Lieutenants, the Criminal Investigation Division Lieutenant, one of the Patrol Sergeants, and the Criminal Investigation Division Sergeant. One of the Police Merit Commissioners, appointed by the Commission President, shall also serve on the Awards Board. Members of the Awards Board shall be appointed when this amended article takes effect and each January.
- E. Awards Processing. Recommended awards shall be submitted to the Awards Board for review and processing. All members of the Awards Board shall be in attendance for awards processing. The Awards Board shall meet as required. The decision as to whether a member's service warrants a merit award and the degree of commendation is a matter of judgment and shall be the responsibility of the Awards Board. The Awards Board in its deliberations should consider the application of one or more of the following attributes by the member recommended for an award:
- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Attention to detail | Exemplary performance | Persistence |
| Courage | Fast thinking | Physical dexterity |
| Courtesy | Good judgment | Professionalism |
| Dedication | Ingenuity | Steadfastness |
| Diligence | Imagination | Sustained performance |
| Efficiency | Investigative proficiency | Tact |
| Endurance | Leadership | Teamwork |
- F. Awards Approval. A majority vote of the Awards Board is required for approval of all awards. In addition to the approval of the Awards Board, a majority vote of the Police Merit Commission is required to award a Gold, Silver, or Bronze Merit Award.
- G. Commendations by the Chief. The Chief is authorized to issue letters of commendation for meritorious performance of a lesser nature than that outlined in this article. Copies of such letters of commendation shall be provided to the Commission so that they may be entered into the record.
- H. Award Commendation. The award commendation shall include:

(1) Citation. A citation of the facts of the action shall be set forth at the time the recipient is commended. Citations shall be entered into the record of the Commission and made a part of the recipient's personnel record. Commendations should also be noted in the member's performance rating for the period in which the commendation was received.

(2) Certificate. A citation certificate, suitable for framing, shall be given to the recipient. The certificate should be delivered to the recipient at an appropriate ceremony in the presence of fellow members of the West Lafayette Police Department.

(3) Recognition Bar. For members who receive a Gold, Silver, or Bronze award, the member shall receive a Merit Recognition Bar, which shall be one inch (1") wide by three-sixteenth inch (3/16") deep. The bar shall be gold, silver, or bronze, depending on the degree of commendation, and shall be engraved with the word "MERIT." It shall be of a locking pin type in order that it may be neatly pinned to the uniform of the member.

- I. Retroactive Awards. Awards authorized by this article may be made retroactive to the date of employment provided the award criteria can be documented."

The motion was unanimously adopted.

- B. Commission President Polles led a discussion as to whether the Commission could occasionally cancel a regularly scheduled meeting if there was no business to conduct. The conclusion of the discussion was to hold regular monthly meetings. If there is no business to conduct, the Commission will convene and then promptly adjourn. Commission Counsel Williams will review Police Merit Commission Rules and Regulations Article I.C.(2) and provide recommended rewording of that article as a portion of the article appears to be contrary to the Open Door Law.
- C. Commissioner Leverenz led a discussion of a possible change to the ranking percentages contained in Police Merit Commission Rules and Regulations Article II.D.(4). Commission President Polles asked Commissioners to continue to think about this possible change, including the possible elimination of the scoring weight to the criminal background check (this would be included in the interview score). In addition, Commissioners were asked to evaluate how to assign weights to the remaining three areas, namely the applicant examination, the internal police interview, and the Commission interview. The discussion will be continued at the next regular meeting. Deputy Chief Walker was requested to provide a Police Department input.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Commissioner Weber moved "to make a conditional offer of employment to the prospective employee we discussed in our Executive Session." The motion passed with a vote of 4 in favor with 1 abstention.
- B. Commission President Polles reported that a new contract is needed to pay for the periodic test preparation services provided by the Industrial Psychology Department of Purdue University for Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Captain advancement examinations. These

periodic costs were not addressed in the contract under which the examination bank was prepared. Commission Counsel Williams will assist with the preparation of this contract.

- C. October 3, 2007 was established as the cut-off date for applications for the October 13, 2007 new applicant testing.
- D. Commissioner Weber reported that one of the officers who would like to take the Sergeant advancement examination on November 3, 2007 has a conflict with that date and has requested that the testing be moved to another date. The Commission requested a recommended revised date after November 3, 2007 from the Police Department. It was determined that in future years a standard date for this testing would be the first non-home Purdue football game Saturday in November.
- E. Commission President Polles requested Commissioners be prepared to discuss dates for applicant interviews at the October meeting.

ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

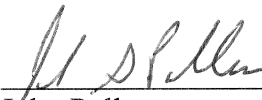
- A. The appointments of Commissioners Leverenz, Nead, and Weber expire in January, 2008.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

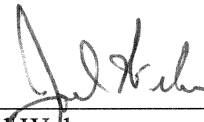
None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 pm.



John Polles
President



Joel Weber
Secretary

WEST LAFAYETTE POLICE MERIT COMMISSION
Meeting Agenda, 10 September 2007
7:30 P.M., Board of Works Room, City Hall

Opening

Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call
Approval of Minutes for Meeting on 13 August 2007

Old Business

Discussion of proposed changes to Article VI of WLPMC R&R concerning Merit Awards (Commissioner Weber)
Discussion of changing Article I.C. (1) of WLPMC R&R concerning regular meetings (Commissioner Polles)
Discussion of changing Article II.D. (4) of WLPMC R&R concerning scoring the applicant for the eligibility list (Commissioner Leverenz)

New Business

Decision on giving a Conditional Offer of Employment to a prospective employee (Polles)

New contract for test preparation for promotions (Polles)

Cut-off date for new applicants to make 13 October testing (Polles)

Discussion on amending the date for the Sergeant's examination (Weber)

Items from the Floor

Public Comments

Adjournment